

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are pending. Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,059,385 ("Guhl") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,667,888 ("Chang"). Claims 28 and 29 are new. The applicant respectfully traverses the rejections and requests reconsideration in view of the following remarks.

Priority Claim

The Examiner noted that the certified copies of the priority documents had not been received and did not acknowledge the priority claims. Certified copies are enclosed herewith of the following: WIPO Application No. GB02/00347, UK Application No. 0102143.5 and UK Application No. 0118896. The applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to acknowledge the priority claim.

Claims 1-29

Claim 1 recites a desk adapted for connection to a second desk as part of a network of desks. The desk includes a desktop comprising a plurality of sides, a bottom-face, and a top face and a chassis positioned substantially beneath the desktop comprising one or more cassettes, wherein at least one cassette includes one or more electronic components. The desk further includes a power distribution system providing power to at least one cassette and an electronic connection system. The power distribution system is positioned substantially beneath the desktop, extending approximately from a first side of the desktop to a second side of the desktop, and configured to provide power to at least one adjacent desk or bridge unit. The electronic connection system provides an electronic connection from the one or more electronic components to an electronic component located in a second desk, and is positioned substantially beneath the desktop and extending approximately from a first side of the desktop to a second side of the desktop.

The applicant respectfully submits that Guhl does not disclose a desk adapted for connection to a second desk as part of a network of desks. Guhl discloses a single computer desk system comprising a desk 40 accommodating a computer module 1 within its chassis. The Examiner has misconstrued the disclosure of Guhl. It should be noted that Guhl's reference

numeral 4 (FIG. 1) does not denote a desk as contended in section 2 of the Office Action, but denotes one side of the computer module 1 that faces the desk 40 (Col. 4, line 24). Similarly, reference numeral 5 denotes another, opposing side of the module 1 that faces another part of the (single) desk 40. Consequently, column 1 of the disclosure of Guhl is directed to a single computer desk system. There is no teaching or suggestion in the remaining part of Guhl that the computer desk system 40 is adapted for connection to a second desk or bridge unit as part of a network of desks.

The Examiner has accepted that Guhl does not disclose a cassette including at least one electronic component, but this will be discussed below in more detail with respect to reference Chang.

Guhl does not disclose a power distribution system extending approximately from a first side of the desktop to a second side of the desktop, and configured to provide power to at least one adjacent desk or bridge unit. Notwithstanding the fact that Guhl does not disclose a desk adapted for connection to a second desk and thus has no reason to teach or suggest the provision of a power distribution system for providing power to an adjacent desk, it should be noted that, in Guhl, the computer is designed to have a depth dimension equal to the desk such that its front face lies flush with the front of the desk and its rear face lies flush with the rear of the desk (see abstract). It is clear from the disclosure of Guhl that the cabling for the power distribution system does not extend from a first side of the desktop to a second side of the desktop and nor is there any need for it to do so. This argument equally applies to other forms of cabling such as electronic connection system cabling.

Thus, Guhl fails to teach or suggest at least three features of the desk recited in independent claim 1 and the desking system recited in independent claim 17.

Referring now to Chang, Chang does not disclose the use of a cassette in a desktop system, insofar as the term "desktop" is properly construed in the context of the present invention. Chang refers to the fact that a "desk computer system requires an electrical connector for the cable connection" (column 1, lines 28 to 30), but this is a reference to a conventional desktop computer which sits upon a desk and is not accommodated within a chassis of a desk

(column 1, lines 21/22). The disclosure of Chang is actually directed to a network card connector that fits into a cassette for a notebook computer. The cassette is defined as a housing encompassing a printed circuit board of the notebook computer (column 1, lines 30 to 33). Consequently, Chang offers to teaching or suggestion of providing a cassette in a chassis of a desk and is irrelevant to this field of endeavour.

In view of the foregoing, it is clear that the teachings of Guhl and Chang not only fail to disclose or suggest all of the claims limitations of claims 1 and 17, but also offer no reason why a skilled person would seriously contemplate combining said teachings. In any event, the combination of said teachings could not result in a desk or desking system as claimed, and independent claims 1 and 17 are in condition for allowance. Claims 2-16 and 18-27 depend from claims 1 and 17 and are therefore also in condition for allowance.

Claims 28 and 29 are new; no new matter is added. With respect to new independent claim 28, it should be noted that the cassette of the present invention does not extend as far as the back of the chassis thereby providing room for a channel to accommodate power distribution cabling, etc. without requiring an increase in a vertical depth of the chassis. Basis for the new claims is found in the drawings as filed and corresponding description.

Favorable reconsideration of the claims is requested.

Brenda Leeds Binder has been given limited recognition under 37 CFR § 10.9(b) as an employee of the Fish & Richardson PC law firm to prepare and prosecute patent applications wherein the patent applicant is a client of Fish & Richardson PC and the attorney or agent of record in the applications is a registered practitioner who is a member of Fish & Richardson, which is the case in the present application. A copy of the Limited Recognition document, which expires December 1, 2004, is attached hereto.

Applicant : Steven Brooks
Serial No. : 10/628,836
Filed : July 28, 2003
Page : 11 of 11

Attorney's Docket No.: 16292-002001

Enclosed is a \$62.00 check for excess claim fees. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: Nov 23, 2004

Brenda Leeds Binder
Brenda Leeds Binder
Limited Recognition under 37 CFR § 10.9(b)

Fish & Richardson P.C.
500 Arguello Street, Suite 500
Redwood City, California 94063
Telephone: (650) 839-5070
Facsimile: (650) 839-5071

50248047.doc